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# The Food Service Equipment Assistance Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE / FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE / WASHINGTON, D.C.  
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The Food Service Equipment Assistance Program is one of the Child Nutrition Programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These programs work toward the goal of providing all children the opportunity to enjoy good nutritious meals. To make these meals available, schools and institutions operating child nutrition programs need the proper type, size, and quantity of food service equipment. The Food Service Equipment Assistance Program (FSEAP) provides funds for eligible schools and residential child care institutions to acquire adequate equipment to offer tasty nutritious meals every schoolday.

To qualify for FSEA funds, such schools and institutions must meet certain nationwide eligibility standards. Eligible schools and institutions are reimbursed for up to 75 percent of total equipment costs. However, especially needy schools and institutions—both those with and without food service—may receive 100 percent funding.

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## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The Food Service Equipment Assistance Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and provides cash and technical assistance to help eligible schools and institutions acquire food service equipment. The program is administered through USDA's Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices and State Departments of Education.

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## DO ALL SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS GET FSEA FUNDS?

No. Only needy schools and institutions are eligible to receive FSEA funds. Food Service Equipment Assistance funds are to be used only to reimburse needy schools and institutions for the cost of equipment actually needed to establish, maintain, or expand nonprofit food service programs.

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## WHAT SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS GET THIS HELP?

To be eligible for Food Service Equipment Assistance funds, a school or institution must have no equipment, or grossly inadequate equipment, and draw attendance from areas in which poor economic conditions exist. Criteria for a school or institution's selection for participation are: (1) the relative need, including financial need, for acquiring equipment (based on information supplied for that school and others that submitted applications); and (2) the amount of funds available to the State in which the school or institution is located.

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## HOW CAN SCHOOLS OR INSTITUTIONS APPLY FOR THE FSEA PROGRAM?

For further information on the Food Service Equipment Assistance Program, write to the State educational agency in your capital city or to: Food and Nutrition Service, School Programs Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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## WHAT IS THE LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM?

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The Food Service Equipment Assistance Program was initiated by the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, which authorized a program to help schools in low-income areas to acquire food service equipment—other than land or buildings—to establish, maintain, or expand food service programs. On October 7, 1975, Public Law 94-105 amended the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to expand the definition of “school” to include “residential child care institutions.”

On November 10, 1977, Public Law 95-166 amended such Acts to change the name of the program from “Nonfood Assistance” to “Food Service Equipment Assistance.”

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This publication supersedes FNS-157 “The Nonfood Assistance Program,” March 1976.

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